



Information Renaissance

P.O. Box 7188

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**MEMO**

**To: Participants in the Universal Service Discussion, CC Docket 96-45**  
**From: Robert Carlitz, Executive Director, Information Renaissance**

**Subject: Universal Service/Network Democracy**

I am writing to announce the start of a five week on-line seminar on the provisions of the Telecommunications Act which deal with Universal Service for schools and libraries. The seminar will be conducted from August 26 through September 27. Participants will include teachers, librarians, school administrators, people from the business community, and government staff. Information Renaissance is hosting this seminar, with support from BellSouth and The Heinz Endowments. Additional contributions are anticipated and would be most welcome.

The seminar is based upon the concept of "Network Democracy." The two-way nature of current high-speed data networks allows them to be used both as a means of disseminating information and of obtaining input from thousands of people at remote sites around the country or around the world. The present application of this concept will bring together for the first time grass-roots practitioners of networking technology in our nation's schools and libraries with experts on telecommunications law and networking technology. The resulting synergy should be able to drive the rulemaking process of the subject of Universal Service for schools and libraries toward a conclusion which maximizes its impact upon our nation's educational infrastructure.

A portion of the seminar will be based upon an electronic library which Information Renaissance is constructing for this activity. At the World Web site

<http://info-ren.pitt.edu/universal-service>

you will find the majority of the Comments and Reply Comments submitted to the Federal Communications Commission on CC Docket 96-45. These documents will be placed under a search engine to allow the simple retrieval of information desired by the seminar's participants. Thus, for the first time, there will not only be broad public access to these important documents; the documents themselves will also be more easily accessible and more easily manipulated than ever before.

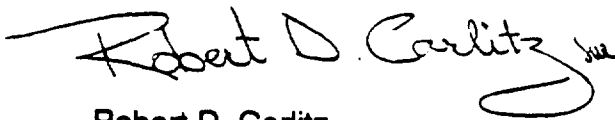
We hope that you and the schools and libraries with which you interact will choose to participate in the upcoming seminar. Registration is now open through the Web site mentioned above. We urge your organization's representatives to participate and to recruit classroom and library practitioners to get involved as well. The broadest level of representation in this activity is likely to produce the best results.

With regard to your own group's previous submissions to the FCC, we hope you will look at the material we have online and will help us make the seminar's library holdings as accurate and complete as possible. Where we were able to obtain electronic versions of the submissions, we have converted them to HTML through an automatic procedure, which is likely to preserve essential formatting and content. Where only paper versions were available we have scanned the paper copy, converted the results into HTML and proofread the text for obvious omissions. Our procedures lack complete rigor, and we cannot claim complete accuracy for the scanned documents. Therefore, if you notice any omissions or errors, we will be happy to try to rectify them. The simplest way to do this is for you to send us a disk with the original copy or to attach a copy of your original text to an electronic mail message.

We would like to be able to offer open enrollment in the seminar to educators and librarians nationwide. In order to meet our expenses on this project we will need additional support from the business community. If your organization is in a position to assist in this effort, we would welcome your assistance. We prefer not to charge any fees to individual participants but to cover costs through donations and grants. Ideally the present activity will be continued throughout the period in which the Telecommunications Act is being implemented. We will be able to meet this goal if the seminar itself runs smoothly and if the corporate and foundation communities continue to provide the necessary support. We appreciate your interest and your assistance in these efforts.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions on this work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert D. Carlitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "C" at the end.

Robert D. Carlitz  
Executive Director  
Information Renaissance



**For the first time in 62 years there is a major revision to the telecommunications law.**

**For the first time local teachers and librarians can be fully involved.**

**For the first time you can be part of the process.**

**Through your on-line participation schools and libraries stand to gain \$1 billion annually from a Universal Service fund.**

## **You Can Participate**

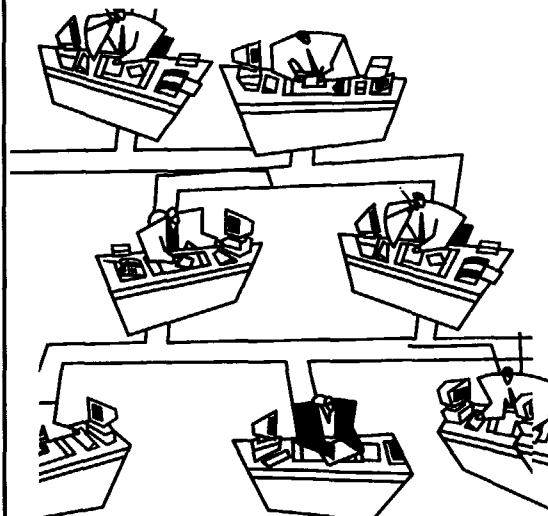
**FCC staff is working to meet a November deadline for implementation of the Telecom Act of 1996.**

**Information Renaissance, with participation from the FCC, is presenting a five-week on-line seminar on Universal Service/Network Democracy Aug. 26 - Sept. 27.**

**People concerned about education will discuss technology, law and the networking needs of schools and libraries.**

**The new law can provide major subsidies for schools and libraries .**

**The FCC wants to hear from people like you.**



## **Goals**

— Seminar participants learn about FCC procedures.

— Educators tell the FCC staff what technology is really needed in local schools and libraries.

— Students get tools and training for jobs of the future.

## **Topics**

— Universal Service provisions of the Telecommunications Act.

— How the Act can help schools and libraries.

— How schools and libraries are using network technology.

— FCC procedures for public involvement.

**"We need to hear from parents, educators, state governments, the Department of Education, and anyone else with something to contribute to reaching our goals." Reed Hundt, Chair of the Federal Communications Commission.**

Join educators and those interested in education in an on-line discussion about the technology needs of students, teachers and librarians.

Results of the discussion will be sent to the FCC for use in their decision about how students can best be served by the new Telecommunications Act.

Only a short time remains. Join us Aug. 26 through Sept. 27 so your comments can go to Washington by the November deadline.

Major funding provided by BellSouth and The Heinz Endowments with additional support from NYNEX and Pacific Bell. Attendance is free. To register visit our Web site at <http://info-ren.pitt.edu>

**Join us on-line Aug. 26 -Sept. 27. The FCC needs to hear from you.**

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URL: <http://info-ren.pitt.edu>**

**Information  
Renaissance**

**To:**

**You care about students ...**

**You know their future includes technology ...**

**You want them to be prepared ...**

*We invite  
you to take  
part in an  
on-line  
seminar*

**The Federal  
Communications  
Commission wants  
to hear from you.**

**Hosted by**

**Information  
Renaissance**